

LOS ANGELES COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

2615 S. GRAND AVE., SUITE 100
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90007



United We Stand



Joseph N. Smith
Director

MINUTES REGULAR MEETING Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Present:

Absent:

Commissioners

Bob Archuleta, Chair
Carvel Gay, Vice Chair
Fred Flores
Steve Rosmarin
Ramon Rodriguez

Commissioners

Mark MacCarley
Dave Culmer
Ramon Rodriguez
Stephanie Stone

County Department

Military and Veterans Affairs

Colonel Joseph Smith, Director
Tatiana Rosas, Executive Secretary

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Approval of Minutes

Chair Bob Archuleta called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m., and welcomed everyone for coming to today's meeting. He stated that today's meeting would be a short one since the Commission has an appointment to tour Bob Hope Patriotic Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chair Carvel Gay and due to a lack of a quorum, only four Commissioners present, the approval of minutes was postponed.

Roll Call

As noted above.

Chairman's Report

Chair stated calls have started to come in for Memorial Day events and activities. This year Memorial Day is on Monday, May 28th he asked that everyone put this on their calendars' and attend the various festivities and events throughout the County. On a personal note, his son Matthew is in Afghanistan and hoping he returns home safe. On behalf of Colonel Smith and the Commission, "We welcome you today."

Bob Hope Patriotic Hall Renovation – Bill Gelpi

Bill Gelpi, Principal Facilities Project Manager, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, stated since last month's updates on the building; he has a few new photos to share with the Commission. The following are the updates on Bob Hope Patriotic Hall:

- The kitchen has a new seamless floor to be completed by the end of the week.
- The Auditorium is fully ADA (Americans with Disability Act) compliant and capacity will be 500 people.

Veterans Advisory Commission Meeting

Minutes of May 9, 2012

Page 2

- The 10th Floor Gym – starting phase of laying the floor; it also will have renovated bleachers and new ADA compliant restrooms for wheelchair bound veterans. Rubber dampers have been installed to mitigate noise though it's not sound proof.
- The basement, 5th, 7th and 9th floors have been used as mechanical spaces to house AC and central heat pipes and are only restroom floors.
- There are new modernized meeting rooms and office spaces, like the Nimitz Room and the 6th floor will have new screens and WiFi accessible, set-up for the next 50 years.
- A site work photo on the newly built central plan in the parking lot.
- The exterior of the building has been cleaned.
- Scheduled to open in September 2012.

Chair thanked Mr. Gelpi and stated he was looking forward to touring the building and seeing the upgrades first hand.

Comments from Audience (three minutes each)

Jay Morales, retired Marine, Vietnam Veteran and Adjutant, American Legion, 17th District, Los Angeles Post No. 8, stated, "Mr. Bill Gelpi is doing a great job on the building." He stated that the Buffalo Soldiers are in the audience and will they too be put in the basement since they want to return to Patriotic Hall?

Mr. Morales stated that we need to work together for the future of the building. He also distributed a prepared statement that he read to the Commission as well as last month's memo that stated the opposition of putting the veterans' organizations in the basement. Jay Morales stated that Los Angeles Post #8 has taken into consideration and sincerely commended the Director, Colonel Joseph Smith on his duly compensated efforts since assuming his position in November, 1988, including his subsequent membership in Post #8. "We look forward to working with you toward a beneficial outcome in the future planning of Bob Hope Patriotic Hall space to accommodate the tax payer, voting generations of Los Angeles County veterans."

Colonel Smith stated that there are service providers for veterans that are not veteran service providers. VA is not able to meet all the needs of the veterans either in quantity or responsiveness. The goal is to make Bob Hope Patriotic Hall into a true Veterans Building providing comprehensive service to veterans their dependents and survivors.

Mr. Glen L. Roosevelt, USMC 1961-1967, Member of the American Legion, and Military & Veterans Affairs Volunteer, distributed his prepared statement that he proceeded to read to the Commission. Mr. Roosevelt commended the Board of supervisors, CEO, Public Works and the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs for their commitment to the veterans and veterans' organizations as demonstrated by the renovation of Patriotic Hall. He also stated, "that it is inappropriate and counterproductive to say publicly that the planning for a better coordination, communication and cooperation of the veteran service organizations to be "misguided" and "flawed" or "misleading" or will lead to the eventual elimination of them. He encouraged the organizations and tenants to cooperate and collaborate with the Department to utilize the enhanced facilities provided by the County to better service the deserving veterans' community."

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Report – Colonel Joseph Smith

- Total National Guard and Reserve Personnel activated for Federal duty is 70,231.
- All Active duty Components and 9 out of 10 Reserve Components of the Armed Forces met or exceeded their recruiting goals for FY 2012. Only the Army which had 95% failed to enlist its goal.
- Recent U.S. – Afghanistan accord ensures a U.S. presence in Afghanistan through 2004 (5-10,000)
- Los Angeles County Park – Court of Flags Helmet
- Memorial Weekend Activity Memo Gold Star Mothers Ceremony at 11:00 a.m. – Friday, May 24th at Gold Star Manor (Drive) Long Beach.

Veterans Advisory Commission Meeting

Minutes of May 9, 2012

Page 3

- Sending out an invite letter to interested veteran organizations and tenants to a meeting on the reopening of Bob Hope Patriotic Hall.

New Business

Election of Commission Officers

Item's for Next Month's Agenda

- Veterans Home Support Committee – Steve Rosmarin
- Commissioner Ramon Rodriguez will invite two Veterans for June's meeting to offer the Invocation and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Rosmarin volunteered the West Los Angeles Home to host the veteran organization meeting in the next 2 weeks.

Good of the Order

Commissioner Rosmarin; stated that it's almost time to get ready to move back into Patriotic Hall. He had the honor of being given an award for "Volunteer of the Year" by Supervisor Yaroslavsky.

Commissioner Flores; "Thank you all for being here today."

Commissioner Gay: "I appreciate everyone being here today. Hopefully, I'll see everyone at the next meeting and we'll discuss the plan and come up with a positive answer for all."

Chair Archuleta; "Thank you all! We have something to fight for, Bob Hope Patriotic Hall. I know we will meet at the 50 yard line. We have organizations that have come forward today and ready to help veterans. Let's work together on this common goal. On a personal note, Matthew, 82nd Airborne, Platoon Leader, said it's not over, and he sends his thanks to everyone that sends packages. Please remember Memorial Day and honor our fallen heroes."

Chair Archuleta adjourned meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Tatiana Rosas
Executive Secretary
May 9, 2012

Note: The next Commission meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, June 13, 2012 at 1:30 p.m. in Suite 100 at the Department of Public Social Services site at 2615 S. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA.